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Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin

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National Weather Summary
March 28 - April 3, 2010

Highlights: Flooding intensified in late March across the **northern Mid-Atlantic coastal plain** and parts of **New England**, following a 4- to 10-inch deluge from the fourth significant storm in little more than a month. By week's end, however, dry weather and record-setting warmth replaced excessive wetness, allowing **Northeastern** rivers to recede. Warmth also expanded across other areas from the **Plains to the East Coast**. In fact, weekly temperatures ranged from 10 to 20 degrees F above normal from the **northern and central Plains into the Northeast**. Late-week readings climbed to 80 degrees F or higher as far north as the **upper Mississippi Valley** and **interior New England**. In contrast, near- to below-normal temperatures prevailed in the **West**. **Western** highlights also included much-needed rain and snow across the northern half of the region. Specifically, **Northwestern** precipitation aided winter grains and boosted high-elevation snow packs. Meanwhile, spring fieldwork proceeded in **southern California** and the **Southwest**. Farther east, occasional showers caused minor fieldwork delays across the **Plains** and **South**. In both regions, however, warm weather promoted rapid winter wheat growth. Recently planted summer crops, such as corn, emerged across the **South**, although dryness was becoming a concern in the **central Gulf Coast region**. Elsewhere, pre-planting fieldwork advanced in the **Midwest** until the arrival of late-week showers. Early-April rain was heaviest in the **central Corn Belt**, where many locations received an inch or more.

Early in the week, strong thunderstorms swept across the **Southeast**, sparking heavy rain and spawning more than a dozen tornadoes. Daily-record rainfall totals for March 28 included 3.53 inches in **Danville, VA**; 2.86 inches in **Greensboro, NC**; and 2.26 inches in **Vero Beach, FL.** Most of the tornadoes were noted in the **Carolinas**. Farther north, March ended with another round of phenomenally heavy **Northeastern** rainfall. **Providence, RI**, received 8.79 inches on March 29-30, representing its wettest 2-day period on record (previously, 7.84 inches on October 14-15, 2005). With 5.32 inches on March 30, **Providence** also experienced its fifth-wettest calendar day on record. Precipitation climbed to record-setting levels for any month in locations such as **Providence** (16.34 inches; previously, 15.38 inches in October 2005) and **Milton, MA** (18.81 inches; previously, 18.78 inches in August 1955). Elsewhere in **Massachusetts**, **Boston's** monthly total of 14.87 inches easily broke its March record (previously, 11.00 inches in 1953). It was **Boston's** second-highest monthly total, behind 17.09 inches in August 1955. Record river crests were noted in several locations, including the **Pawtuxet River at Cranston, RI** (11.79 feet above flood stage on March 31; previously, 5.98 feet on March 15, 2010), and the **Taunton River near Bridgewater, MA** (4.47 feet above flood stage on April 1; previously, 4.01 feet on March 17, 2010). The **Neponset River near Norwood, MA** (2.16 feet above flood stage on March 30), achieved its highest level since November 5, 1955 (2.32 feet).

Meanwhile, cool, stormy weather developed across the **West**, while warmth gradually expanded from the **Plains into the East**. Daily-record highs in **Texas** for the last day of March included 98 degrees F in **Childress** and 90 degrees F in **Borger**. In **Utah**, late-March snowfall totaled 29 inches in **Alta** and 14 inches in **Grantsville**, while wind gusts were clocked to 102 m.p.h. on **Signal Peak** and 98 m.p.h. on **Ogden Peak**. A gust to 102 m.p.h. was also reported at **Logan Pass, MT.** In **Nevada**, **Ely** (9.1 inches) received a daily-record snowfall for March 31. Farther east, three consecutive daily-record highs were established from March 31 – April 2 in **Michigan** locations such as **Gaylord** (74, 79, and 81 degrees F), and **Houghton Lake** (74, 79, and 81 degrees F). **Blacksburg, VA** (87 degrees F on April 2), achieved a monthly record high, previously set with a reading of 86 degrees F on April 19, 1976, April 17, 2002, and April 25, 2009. **Pittsburgh, PA** (85 degrees F on April 2), experienced its earliest reading of 85 degrees F or higher (previously, 85 degrees F on April 11, 1930). In **West Virginia**, **Elkins** (89 degrees F on April 2) topped 88 degrees F more than 3 weeks earlier than ever before (previously, 90 degrees F on April 24, 1925). In **Maine**, **Caribou** (82 degrees F on April 3) posted its earliest reading of 80 degrees F or higher and eclipsed its daily record by 24 degrees F. In contrast, chilly air settled across the **West**, where daily-record lows included 25 degrees F (on April 1) in **Pullman, WA**; 29 degrees F (on April 2) in **Cottonwood, AZ**; and 33 degrees F (on April 3) in **Red Bluff, CA.** Additional precipitation arrived late in the week in the **West**, where daily-record amounts included 0.53 inch (on April 1) in **Miles City, MT**, and 1.24 inches (on April 2) in **Olympia, WA. Ely, NV**, received an additional 4.9 inches of snow on April 3. Snow spread as far east as **North Dakota**, where April 2-3 totals as high as 4 to 12 inches were reported. On April 2, **Bismarck, ND**, set records for both precipitation (1.15 inches) and snowfall (5.0 inches). Elsewhere, high winds raked many parts of the country, with gusts reaching 67 m.p.h. (on March 30) in **Elko, NV**; 67 m.p.h. (on March 30) in **Cut Bank, MT**; 67 m.p.h. (on April 1) in **Springfield, CO**; 69 m.p.h. (on April 1) in **Ft. Stanton, NM**; and 59 m.p.h. (on April 3) in **Findlay, OH.**

National Weather Summary provided by USDA's World Agricultural Outlook Board.
For more information, call (202) 720-2397.

Agricultural Summary
March 29 – April 4, 2010

Highlights: With the exception of areas along the Gulf Coast and in Florida, abnormally warm temperatures blanketed much of the country east of the Rocky Mountains. Most notably, temperatures throughout the Great Lakes climbed to 15 degrees or more above average. In Minnesota, sunny skies and moderate winds helped to dry previously soggy fields, leading to the additional harvest of portions of the remaining 2009 corn crop. While many regions of the United States were dry during the week, precipitation in excess of 4 inches fell along the northern Pacific and Atlantic Coasts.

Winter Wheat: Nationally, 65 percent of the 2010 winter wheat crop was reported in good to excellent condition, up 22 percentage points from this time last year and slightly above ratings from the week ending December 6, 2009, the last available report for the current crop. In Kansas, the largest winter wheat-producing State, 69 percent of the crop was reported as good to excellent, with minimal disease, freeze, insect, or wind damage evident. Elsewhere, warmer temperatures coupled with adequate soil moisture levels in Texas led to improved crop conditions, although stripe and leaf rust prompted fungicide applications in areas of the Blacklands.

Cotton: With activity limited to Arizona, California, and Texas, producers had planted 4 percent of the Nation's cotton crop by week's end, equaling progress from last year but 2 percentage points behind the 5-year average. While field preparations were on-going in northern Texas and the Trans-Pecos region, producers in the Coastal Bend made good progress with improved planting conditions.

Sorghum: Planting had advanced to 16 percent complete by April 4, slightly behind both last year and the 5-year average. In Texas, wet fields and abnormally cool temperatures throughout much of March delayed the start of planting, pushing overall progress, at 37 percent, 1 week behind normal. Improved growing conditions in recent weeks promoted crop growth in the Coastal Bend and aided emergence in South Texas.

Rice: Planting was underway in the Delta and Texas, and by April 4, producers had seeded 14 percent of the crop, 4 percentage points ahead of last year and 2 percentage points ahead of the 5-year average. Producers in California, the second largest rice-producing State, spent the week plowing fields and applying pre-planting herbicides.

Small Grains: Producers across the United States had seeded 33 percent of the 2010 oat crop, 3 percentage points ahead of last year and 2 percentage points ahead of the 5-year average. Seeding was complete in Texas, where 11 percent of the crop was at or beyond the heading stage.

Cotton: Percent Planted, Selected States [1]

State	Week Ending			2005-2009 Avg.
	Apr 4, 2010	Mar 28, 2010	Apr 4, 2009	
	Percent	*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*
AL	0	NA	0	0
AZ	25	NA	19	15
AR	0	NA	0	0
CA	15	NA	8	10
GA	0	NA	0	0
KS	0	NA	0	0
LA	0	NA	0	0
MS	0	NA	0	0
MO	0	NA	0	0
NC	0	NA	0	0
OK	0	NA	0	0
SC	0	NA	0	0
TN	0	NA	0	0
TX	6	NA	6	10
VA	0	NA	0	0
15 Sts	4	NA	4	6

[1] These 15 States planted 99% of last year's cotton acreage.

Sorghum: Percent Planted, Selected States [1]

State	Week Ending			2005-2009 Avg.
	Apr 4, 2010	Mar 28, 2010	Apr 4, 2009	
	Percent	*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*
AR	1	NA	1	9
CO	0	NA	0	0
IL	0	NA	0	0
KS	0	NA	0	0
LA	25	NA	3	13
MO	0	NA	0	0
NE	0	NA	0	0
NM	0	NA	3	1
OK	0	NA	0	0
SD	0	NA	0	0
TX	37	NA	42	45
11 Sts	16	NA	17	19

[1] These 11 States planted 98% of last year's sorghum acreage.

Oats: Percent Planted, Selected States [1]

State	Week Ending			2005-2009 Avg.
	Apr 4, 2010	Mar 28, 2010	Apr 4, 2009	
	Percent	*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*
IA	28	NA	7	13
MN	7	NA	0	0
NE	15	NA	20	25
ND	0	NA	0	0
OH	4	NA	23	9
PA	14	NA	0	10
SD	2	NA	0	5
TX	100	NA	100	100
WI	0	NA	0	1
9 Sts	33	NA	30	31

[1] These 9 States planted 64% of last year's oat acreage.

Rice: Percent Planted, Selected States [1]

State	Week Ending			2005-2009 Avg.
	Apr 4, 2010	Mar 28, 2010	Apr 4, 2009	
	Percent	*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*
AR	8	NA	1	6
CA	0	NA	0	0
LA	50	NA	39	39
MS	10	NA	1	3
MO	0	NA	0	2
TX	35	NA	64	49
6 Sts	14	NA	10	12

[1] These 6 States planted 100% of last year's rice acreage.

Winter Wheat: Crop Condition by Percent, Selected States Week Ending Apr 4, 2010

State	VP	P	F	G	EX
	Percent	*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*
AR	1	2	48	40	9
CA	0	0	5	20	75
CO	0	3	24	46	27
ID	0	0	13	78	9
IL	9	21	41	28	1
IN	0	2	33	55	10
KS	1	5	25	57	12
MI	1	8	15	64	12
MO	11	13	37	37	2
MT	2	6	49	39	4
NE	0	5	35	55	5
NC	4	18	39	34	5
OH	1	1	22	58	18
OK	1	4	26	60	9
OR	0	3	42	44	11
SD	1	3	25	59	12
TX	2	7	31	47	13
WA	1	5	21	55	18
18 Sts	1	5	29	52	13
Prev Wk	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Prev Yr	10	12	35	37	6

VP-Very Poor, P-Poor, F-Fair, G-Good, EX-Excellent.
National crop conditions for selected States are weighted based on 2009 planted acreage.

Crop Progress and Condition Survey and Estimating Procedures

Survey Procedures: Crop progress and condition estimates are based on survey data collected each week from early April through the end of November. The non-probability crop progress and condition surveys include input from approximately 5,000 reporters whose occupations provide them opportunities to make visual observations and frequently bring them in contact with farmers in their counties. Based on standard definitions, these reporters subjectively estimate progress of farmers' activities and progress of crops through various stages of development. They also provide subjective evaluations of crop conditions.

Most reporters complete their questionnaires on Friday or early Monday morning and submit them to the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Field Offices in their States by mail, telephone, fax, e-mail, or through a secured internet website. A small number of reports are completed on Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday. Regardless of when questionnaires are completed, reporters are asked to report for the week ending on Sunday. For reports submitted prior to the Sunday reference date, a degree of uncertainty is introduced by projections for weekend changes in progress and condition. By the end of the 2001 season, nearly two-thirds of the data were being submitted through the internet website. As a result, about one-half of all data are submitted on Monday morning, significantly reducing projection uncertainty.

Reporters are sent written reporting instructions at the beginning of each season and are contacted periodically to ensure proper reporting. Terms and definitions of crop stages and condition categories used as reporting guidelines are available on the NASS website at:

www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/National_Crop_Progress/terms_definitions/index.asp.

Estimating Procedures: Reported data are reviewed for reasonableness and consistency by comparing with data reported the previous week and data reported in surrounding counties for the current week. Each State Field Office summarizes the reported data to district and State levels, weighting each county's reported data by NASS county acreage estimates. Summarized indications are compared with previous week estimates, and progress items are compared with earlier stages of development and historical averages to ensure reasonableness. Weather events and reporter comments are also taken into consideration. State estimates are submitted to the Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) along with supporting comments, where they are compared with surrounding States and compiled into a National level summary by weighting each State by its acreage estimates.

Revision Policy: Progress and condition estimates in the ***Crop Progress*** report are released after 4:00 pm ET on the first business day of the week. These estimates are preliminary and subject to corrections or updates in the ***Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin*** that is released after 12:00 pm ET on the second business day of the week. These estimates are subject to revision the following week.

Crop Progress and Condition tables expected next week:

Corn – Planted
Cotton – Planted
Oats – Planted, Emerged
Rice – Planted, Emerged
Sorghum – Planted
Sugarbeets – Planted
Winter Wheat – Headed, Condition

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